

Long Beach Island Health Department Offers Low Cost Vaccines for Adults

The Long Beach Island Health Department is pleased to announce that four important disease-preventing vaccines are available to Long Beach Island residents, 18 years of age and older, regardless of income or insurance status. The vaccines are funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) program. There is a limited supply of each vaccine so they will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis by appointment only. There is an administration fee of \$15, but no one will be turned away because of inability to pay.

The vaccines that are available are:

Adacel-Tdap (Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis) Vaccine – Infants and young children are routinely vaccinated against these bacterial diseases, but adults need protection, too. Diphtheria and pertussis are spread from person to person and tetanus enters the body through cuts, scratches, or wounds. This vaccine is routinely recommended for adolescents 11-18 years. All adults should get a booster dose of tetanus every 10 years, and those under 65 who have never gotten Tdap should substitute it for the next booster dose. Tdap is particularly important for parents, grandparents and other caregivers, who have close contact with infants, to protect them from pertussis.

Menactra-Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine - Meningococcal disease is a serious bacterial illness that causes bacterial meningitis and blood infections. This vaccine is routinely recommended at 11 or 12 years of age, but can be given to other people through 55 years of age, who are at increased risk for meningococcal disease. Meningococcal vaccine is recommended for college freshmen living in dormitories; anyone traveling to, or living in, a part of the world where meningococcal disease is common, such as parts of Africa; and anyone who has a damaged spleen, or whose spleen has been removed.

Pneumovax-Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine – Pneumococcal disease is caused by a bacteria and is a leading cause of vaccine preventable illness and death in the United States. The vaccine is recommended for all adults ages 65 and older and is covered by Medicare. Other adults, under 65 years of age, who should receive the vaccine include: people with certain long term health problems, such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease; and people with a weakened immune system. Recently, recommendations have been expanded to include adult smokers, who are four times more likely to be affected by pneumococcal disease than non smokers.

Gardasil-HPV (Humanpapillomavirus) Vaccine - Infection from HPV can lead to cervical and other cancers in women as well as genital warts in men and women. The vaccine is important because it can prevent most cases of cervical cancer in females, if it is given before a person is exposed to the virus. The HPV vaccine is given in a three-dose series, and is routinely recommended for girls 11 or 12 years of age. The vaccine is also recommended for females up to 26 years of age who did not get all 3 doses when they were younger. Men up to 26 years of age may get Gardasil vaccine to prevent genital warts.

The Long Beach Island Health Department also offers low cost immunizations to children and adolescents through their Well Child and Adolescent Program. For more information or to make an appointment call 492-1212 to speak to a public health nurse.